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~~S E C R E T~~ TAIPEI 5879

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SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, MARR, MASS, TW
SUBJ: ROC ATTEMPT TO ACQUIRE EC-121

1. SUMMARY. SENIOR ROC MILITARY HAVE COMPLAINED TO MISSION OFFICERS THAT STATE DEPT IS BLOCKING ACQUISITION OF TWO EC-121 AIRCRAFT AND HAVE ASKED FOR COUNTRY TEAM ASSISTANCE. WE HAVE INFORMED THEM EC-121 PROPOSAL DOES NOT HAVE COUNTRY TEAM APPROVAL AND IS NOT ADVOCATED BY DOD OR CNO. GROC WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR AIRBORNE ..... CAPABILITY. FOR THIS REASON, MISSION WISHES URGE AGAIN THAT IT BE INFORMED AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE ON ALL PROPOSALS WHICH SURFACE IN WASHINGTON FOR MAJOR ROC EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS SYSTEM ACQUISITIONS, INCLUDING ITEMS AS SENSITIVE AND POTENTIALLY PROVOCATIVE TO PRC ..... END SUMMARY.

2. GENERAL LAI, CHIEF OF GENERAL STAFF, AND OTHER SENIOR ROC MILITARY HAVE COMPLAINED TO SENIOR MISSION OFFICERS THAT STATE DEPT IS BLOCKING ROC ACQUISITION

DECLASSIFIED • E.O. 12958 Sec. 3.6
With PORTIONS EXEMPTED
E.O. 12958 Sec. 1.5 (d)
MR 02-22, #4; et. ltr. 3/6/02
By dae NARA, Date 4/16/02

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OF EC-121 AIRCRAFT DESPITE CNO AND DOD APPROVAL OF THAT ACQUISITION. THESE OFFICERS HAVE VOICED A STRONG DESIRE FOR ROC AIRBORNE SIGINT CAPABILITY AND FOR IMPROVED ELECTRONIC WARFARE KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY. THEY ARE AWARE OF EW DEVELOPMENTS AND TACTICS IN MID-EAST OCTOBER WAR (A GROUP OF ISRAELI DEFENSE OFFICIALS ARE CURRENTLY IN TAIPEI AND EW MATTERS PROBABLY HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED), ALTHOUGH ROC EW TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE IS VERY LIMITED, ROC OFFICERS TEND TO WANT ANY AND ALL OPTIONS.

3. AFTER DISCUSSION IN COUNTRY TEAM MILITARY SECURITY COMMITTEE, FOLLOWING COORDINATED POSITION WAS GIVEN GENERAL LAI BY CHIEF MAAG:

A. WE WILL CONTINUE WITH POSITIVE ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE THROUGH EW ANNEX OF DATA EXCHANGE AGREEMENT AND OTHER APPROVED EW PROJECTS, AND WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE EW ORDER OF BATTLE INFORMATION.

B. SOME ROC AIRBORNE EW INTERESTS ARE NOT VALID MILITARY REQUIREMENTS AND OTHERS CAN BE SATISFIED BY OTHER MEANS. DEDICATED AIRBORNE ASSETS ARE VERY COSTLY, OFTEN PROVOCATIVE, AND FREQUENTLY NOT EFFECTIVE.

C. COST ALONE OF INTRODUCING AND MAINTAINING EC-121 SYSTEM IS PROHIBITIVE. COUNTRY TEAM UNANIMOUSLY AGREE IN NOT SUPPORTING EC-121 ACQUISITION. EC-121 ACQUISITION IS NOT ADVOCATED BY DOD OR CNO AS ALLEGED BY ROC MILITARY OFFICIALS.

4. GENERAL LAI AGREED EC-121 WOULD BE VERY EXPENSIVE AND PROBABLY NOT COST EFFECTIVE, BUT FELT IT WOULD BE EDUCATIONAL TOOL FOR CHUNG SHAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MIGHT OFFER SOME AIRBORNE OPTIONS IN CASE OF EMERGENCY. LAI PERSISTS IN WANTING AIRBORNE EW CAPABILITY, ARGUING HIS STAFF BELIEVE THERE ARE CERTAIN EW TASKS WHICH CAN BE MORE EFFECTIVELY ACCOMPLISHED AIRBORNE. HE CONCLUDED WITH PLEA THAT IF NOT EC-121, WE HELP ROC DEVELOP CAPABILITY USING C-54, C-119 OR C-123.

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5. ..... HAD ESSENTIALLY SIMILAR CONVERSATIONS WITH ADMIRAL WU, ROCN INTELLIGENCE CHIEF, AND ADMIRAL SOONG, NAVY CINC.

6. COMUSTDC STATES ROC ACQUISITION OF TWO EC-121 AIRCRAFT WOULD NOT ADD SIGNIFICANT CAPABILITY TO US/ROC DEFENSE POSTURE.

7. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT ROC OFFICIALS WHO POSHED EC-121 PROPOSAL WILL NOT BE DETERRED BY THIS ONE FAILURE AND WE ANTICIPATE THEY WILL CONTINUE TO LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO BROADEN THEIR AIRBORNE ..... CAPABILITY, PERHAPS IN WAYS WHICH WOULD BE CONTRARY TO US INTERESTS. FOR THIS REASON, MISSION AGAIN EMPHASIZES GENERAL RULE THAT ROC MILITARY SYSTEMS ACQUISITION PROPOSALS WHICH SURFACE IN WASHINGTON--PARTICULARLY ITEMS AS SENSITIVE AND POTENTIALLY PROVOCATIVE TO PRC AS ..... --BE PROMPTLY REFERRED TO COUNTRY TEAM MISSION SECURITY COMMITTEE FOR REVIEW.
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